

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~14th October, 1960COCOM Document 4183COORDINATING COMMITTEERECORD OF DISCUSSIONONTHE DRAFT OF THE FOURTEENTH BATTLE ACT REPORT3rd October, 1960

Present: Belgium (Luxembourg), France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

Reference: COCOM Document 4145.

1. The UNITED STATES Delegate referred to Document 4145 and to his request that informal comments on the draft of the body of the Fourteenth "Battle Act" Report be given to him by October 3rd (COCOM Summary (60) 44). He mentioned that informal suggestions had been transmitted to him by the French, German, Italian and United Kingdom Delegates, and that he had informed Washington of these suggestions; that he had received no other suggestions; he would therefore now report to his authorities that his informal consultation with the delegations had been completed. He thanked all delegations for their examination of the draft report.
2. The NETHERLANDS Delegate, on instructions from his authorities, took this opportunity of drawing the attention of Delegations to the need to maintain the maximum possible discretion as to the existence and activity of the Coordinating Committee. In this connexion he made a distinction between the Committee's documents, especially the records of discussion in the meetings, and publications emanating from authorities, organisations or private individuals, published outside the Committee. The documents of the Committee, as was clear from the heading "Secret" or "Confidential", must of course be treated with absolute discretion. The Netherlands authorities, however, believed that even the second group of publications, in so far as the latter contained references to the Committee, even in a general matter, ran the risk of drawing public attention to the activities of the Committee.
3. It was obvious that it was not always possible to avoid the appearance of publications concerning the Coordinating Committee, especially if they emanated from circles unconnected with administrative bodies. It seemed desirable nevertheless that the minimum of publicity should be given to the Committee's existence and for that reason it was important that Governments should be the first to avoid as much as possible the issuance of information relating to the Committee. The Netherlands Delegation understood however that in the case under consideration it was inevitable that the United States authorities should mention the Committee in their report to Congress, since there was a direct relationship between the activities of the Coordinating Committee and those of the United States authorities responsible for the carrying out of the Battle Act. They wished to stress that they were not therefore asking that the passages in the Draft Report relating to the Committee should be deleted; they wished merely in a more general sense to draw the attention of Delegations to the fact that it would be greatly appreciated by the Netherlands authorities if Governments could see to it that the minimum of publicity should be given to the existence of the Coordinating Committee and to its activities.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

COCOM Document 4183

4. The ITALIAN Delegate intervened to assure his Netherlands colleague that, as far as Italy was concerned, and in accordance with past practice, only the minimum publicity would be given to the activities of the Coordinating Committee.

5. The UNITED STATES Delegate said he would report to his authorities the statement just made by his Netherlands colleague. He would certainly subscribe to the emphasis on guarding against divulging classified information to the public. The United States Delegation placed great stress on security-consciousness. But, as had long been recognized by all participating Governments, the existence of the Committee and the general nature of its work did not constitute classified information and there were occasions on which it was appropriate, in some cases even necessary, for participating Governments to provide the public with certain types of generalized information as to Committee activities and the results of the Committee's deliberations. By doing so, discreetly of course, it had often been possible to avoid or counteract erroneous and harmful publicity. The Delegate was pleased to note that the Netherlands was not suggesting suppression or change of the Battle Act Report.

CONFIDENTIAL